

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



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NEWS RELEASE

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Deputy Mayor Atkins Announces 18 Million Dollars In Tax Credits To Build Affordable Housing Complex

Senior Community Centers Complex To Offer Affordable Housing For 150 Seniors

SAN DIEGO -- Deputy Mayor Toni Atkins recently announced an \$18 million tax credit allocation for Senior Community Centers to develop critically needed affordable housing for San Diego seniors. City Heights Square, to be located at 43rd and Polk in City Heights, will provide 150 handicap accessible units for low-income seniors who earn less than \$22,000 a year. Senior Community Centers will partner with Chelsea Services Corporation to build the project.

The tax credits, issued by the federal government and allocated by the State of California, will be sold to a private investor to raise equity for the complex. In June, the City of San Diego's Redevelopment Agency contributed \$7 million to the project.

"The tax credits mean that a large portion of the project is paid for," said Atkins. "With the more affordable single-room-occupancy hotels continually shutting down in San Diego, low-income residents are left with few housing options. Particularly vulnerable are our seniors. Projects like the City Heights complex are critical for the survival of this population."

Atkins cites the recent announcement of the Pickwick Hotel closure in downtown as an example of how many low-income seniors are being displaced and facing a life on the streets.

"The problem of displaced seniors is ongoing and we need more organizations like Senior Community Centers to step up and create affordable housing in San Diego," Atkins said.

The project follows Senior Community Centers' successful opening of Potiker Family Senior Residence located in downtown's East Village. Potiker Residence houses 200 low-income seniors and provides its residents access to the center's nutrition and social service programs. The City Heights project will follow the same model.

"The City Heights complex will be a safety net for the seniors living there, just as Potiker is for its

residents," said Paul Downey, president and CEO of Senior Community Centers. "City Heights has one of the highest concentrations of low-income seniors living in the region. We are looking forward to bringing our services to this area and significantly improving the quality of life of many of the seniors living there."

Rent for qualifying seniors at the City Heights complex will range from \$359 to \$549 per month. Downey said Senior Community Centers will provide supportive housing services--meals, social work, healthcare and mental health care--for the residents. He added that the surrounding amenities make the complex an ideal place to live.

"Seniors will have access to bus stops, shopping centers, health clinics and 24-hour pharmacies, all within walking distance," said Downey. "Everything they need will be at their fingertips, including a safe and secure place to live."

The cost of the building will total \$27.5 million and it is expected to break ground in February 2006 with completion to be in the Spring of 2007. Downey said his board and staff are gearing up for a capital campaign to raise the remainder of the funds.

"We will be asking the community to partner with us to ensure that the building is completed and all of the necessary services are in place," Downey said.

Senior Community Centers is a nonprofit agency providing low-income seniors with meals, social, medical and mental health services, homeless and housing assistance, and cultural activities. For more information, visit www.servingseniors.org or call 619/235-6572.

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